

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today said, "I support the troops in Iraq without question, but not the 'Pinocchio policy' that sent them there."

"The President's and the Republican's insistence on linking \$67 billion in support for the troops with \$20 billion in Iraqi reconstruction deliberately blurs the lines between the two. But I will not be bullied by a Republican political ploy to use the tactic of equating support for our troops in Iraq with a "Yes" vote on the \$87 billion supplemental appropriations bill. I will not be pushed into voting for a policy that continues to needlessly sacrifice the lives and limbs of our finest young men and women - an ill-planned, open-ended, go-it-alone, blank check, that refuses to be accountable for the \$79 billion we've already spent.

"I refuse to support a policy that has no exit strategy or an end to American occupation - in violation of the 'Powell doctrine.' President Bush says we'll be there as long as it takes, and National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, talks of a 'generational' commitment, which I interpret to mean a commitment of 10, 15, 20 years or more. While one authority projected that Iraq would cost \$1.7 billion, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz said Iraq's oil reserves could pay for their own reconstruction, but now we know it could cost the American taxpayer as much as \$300-to-\$500 billion or more.

"President Bush has offered many rationales for our unprecedented and new policy of preemptive invasion and occupation of another sovereign nation: Saddam tried to kill my daddy; Saddam violated 17 UN resolutions; he possessed weapons of mass destruction, including biological, chemical and nuclear weapons that represented an imminent threat to the United States; UN inspections had failed; Saddam was a very bad person who violated the human rights of his own people; Saddam was involved with Al Qaeda and 9/11; we are fighting for freedom, self-determination and democracy in Iraq - principles and ideas President Bush won't

support in his own nation's capital; it is a first step toward solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and, finally, the Administration said it would serve the interests of establishing democracy throughout the Middle East region.

"This 'Pinocchio Policy' - ideologically, not factually, driven from the very beginning - has involved inaccurate, misleading and deceptive information and statements, maybe even lies, and continues unabated with attacks on media coverage of the war and a concerted propaganda campaign led by the President and joined by Vice President Richard Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice.

"The U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq has resulted in great damage and we have an obligation to fix what we have destroyed - but it should be done in the right way. We must face the truth, acknowledge our errors, and bring the rest of the world into the security and reconstruction process as full partners through the good offices of the United Nations, NATO and by involving other critical nations. Only such a true assessment and world-wide effort will allow us to put the great fall of Iraq, like Humpty Dumpty, back together again.